



National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence

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Ref : 2010/013

ISSUED: MONDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2010

PRESS RELEASE

NICE welcomes topic suggestions for QOF

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) has today (Monday 8 February) opened the second and final phase of topic suggestion for the 2012/13 Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF). An online topic suggestion facility will allow stakeholders to submit suggestions for new indicators for QOF based on NICE guidance or other NHS Evidence accredited sources. Anyone with an interest in health, including health professionals, patients, community groups and voluntary organisations are encouraged to contribute to the development of the 2012/13 framework via the [NICE website](http://www.nice.org.uk).

The second phase of topic suggestion is open from Monday 8 February until Monday 8 March. When this four-week period closes each suggestion will be reviewed against criteria provided in the submission form and suitable suggestions for the QOF will be presented to an independent advisory committee to consider. The indicators for the 2012/13 QOF will be the first set to pass through the new NICE process in full, and the topic suggestion represents the first stage of their development.

Val Moore, NICE Implementation Director said: "We recognise the importance of making sure professional groups, patients and community and voluntary organisations have a clear opportunity to contribute to the development of indicators at every stage of the NICE process for QOF. For this reason NICE has set up the online topic suggestion facility to allow stakeholders to submit their own ideas for new areas for indicator development. This second phase of topic suggestion is the last opportunity for stakeholders to contribute to the development of potential indicators for the 2012/13 framework and we actively encourage any feedback."

In August 2011 NICE will publish a menu of potential indicators for 2012/13 together with recommendations on indicators to be considered for retirement. The final decision on which indicators are included in the QOF will be decided by NHS Employers, on behalf of the Department of Health, the British Medical Association (BMA) and the General Practitioners Committee (GPC).

Ends

For more information call the NICE press office on 0845 003 7782 or out of hours on 07775 583813

Notes to editors

About QOF

1. Introduced in 2004 the Quality and Outcomes framework (QOF) is a voluntary annual incentive scheme that rewards GP practices in the UK for implementing systematic improvements in quality of care for patients. The QOF operates through a points system which rewards GPs for their performance in relation to groups of indicators. These payments range from those relating to clinical and health improvement topics such as coronary heart disease and hypertension to patient experience topics such as the length of consultations. NICE's role is only concerned with the clinical and health improvement indicators.
2. NICE took over the arrangements for managing the new process of developing indicators and reviewing the existing indicators in April 2009. It established a new independent Primary Care Quality and Outcomes Framework Indicator Advisory Committee responsible for reviewing existing QOF indicators and recommending new ones before producing a national "menu" of approved indicators which will be made available through the NICE website.
3. NICE published the first menu of potential indicators in August 2009 for the 2010/11 Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) together with recommendations on indicators to be considered for retirement. Negotiations between the GPC and NHS Employers on the 2010/11 QOF were carried out alongside a set of unique and important circumstances for primary care, principally the ongoing concerns over swine flu and the important role primary care has to play in delivering flu vaccinations. Regrettably the NICE menu for QOF could not be taken forward in these unique circumstances.
4. NICE is currently developing the clinical and health improvement indicators for the 2011/12 Quality Outcomes Framework. In August 2010 NICE will publish a menu of potential indicators for 2011/12 together with recommendations on indicators to be considered for retirement.

About NICE

1. The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) is the independent organisation responsible for providing national guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention and treatment of ill health.
2. NICE produces guidance in three areas of health:
 - **public health** – guidance on the promotion of good health and the prevention of ill health for those working in the NHS, local authorities and the wider public and voluntary sector
 - **health technologies** – guidance on the use of new and existing medicines, treatments and procedures within the NHS
 - **clinical practice** – guidance on the appropriate treatment and care of people with specific diseases and conditions within the NHS.

